

EFFECTIVE MAY 1, 2022

Civil Courts - Procedure for Foreign Language Interpreters

It is the goal of Travis County Civil District Courts to provide meaningful access to court services for persons with limited English proficiency as mandated by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.

I. TYPE OF INTERPRETERS

A. Live Interpreters:

1. Texas state court certified interpreters should be used whenever possible under reasonable circumstances.
2. Non-state court certified interpreters may only be utilized when there is no available Texas state court certified interpreter within a 75-mile range.

B. Phone/Video Interpreters:

1. Texas state court certified interpreters may be utilized in emergency situations or when the use of remote interpreters is reasonable given the circumstances of the hearing.
2. Non-state court certified interpreters should be utilized only when there is no Texas state court certified interpreter within a 75-mile range and the use of a non-state certified interpreter is reasonable under the circumstances of the hearing.

II. REQUESTS FOR INTERPRETERS

A. Request by Presiding Judge: Interpreters shall be used upon request by the presiding judge.

B. Request by Self-Represented Litigant:

1. *Scheduled Hearings:* When setting a hearing, the setting party should notify the Staff Services Coordinator, Ms. Lauri Roberts in the Court Administrator's Office at Lauri.Roberts@traviscountytexas.gov when an interpreter is needed for a party or a witness. Self-represented litigants should be informed that the failure to request an interpreter may result in a delay of his or her hearing. A non-moving party who needs interpretive services should confirm that an interpreter will be available at the hearing.

2. *Emergency Hearings:* Once a party notifies the Staff Services Coordinator in the Court Administrator's Office of an emergency hearing, an interpreter will be scheduled as quickly as possible. If possible, self-represented litigants should contact the Staff Services Coordinator and request an interpreter before arrival to avoid delay.

C. Attorney Request:

1. *Scheduled Hearings:* When setting a hearing, the setting attorney should notify the Staff Services Coordinator, Ms. Lauri Roberts, in the Court Administrator's Office at Lauri.Roberts@traviscountytx.gov when an interpreter is needed for a party or a witness. Attorneys should be informed that failure to request an interpreter may result in a delay of his or her hearing. An attorney may use a Texas certified interpreter at any scheduled hearing, but the cost of that interpreter will not be reimbursed without prior approval by the Staff Services Coordinator or the presiding judge. A non-moving party who needs interpretive services should confirm that an interpreter will be available at the hearing.
2. *Emergency Hearings:* Once an attorney notifies the Staff Services Coordinator in the Court Administrator's Office of an emergency hearing, an interpreter will be scheduled as quickly as possible. Attorneys should contact the Staff Services Coordinator and request an interpreter before arrival to avoid delay. An attorney may use a Texas certified interpreter at an emergency hearing, but the cost of that interpreter will not be reimbursed without prior approval by the Staff Services Coordinator or the presiding judge.

- D. Withdrawing Request: As soon as the requesting party has knowledge that an interpreter is no longer needed or that the hearing has been passed, the requesting attorney/self-represented litigant shall notify the Staff Services Coordinator in the Court Administrator's Office at Lauri.Roberts@traviscountytx.gov to cancel the request.

III. RATE OF PAYMENT

The pay for interpreters shall be as follows:

In-Person Hearings / Jury Trials - \$100/hour

- A. A \$200, 2-hour minimum will be paid for scheduled hearings/jury trials.
- B. Any hearing lasting more than two hours shall be paid at a rate of \$100 per hour, such that services shall be paid at a rate of \$25 for every 15 minutes or any portion thereof.
 - *For example, interpreters who interpret for a four-hour jury trial shall be paid \$400. During the time period the Court is not in session for lunch or dinner, the interpreter shall not be paid.*

Remote Hearings / Jury Trials - \$65/hour

- A. A \$130, 2-hour minimum will be paid for scheduled hearings/jury trials.
- B. Any hearing lasting more than two hours shall be paid at a rate of \$65 per hour, such that services shall be paid at a rate of \$16.25 for every 15 minutes or any portion thereof.
 - *For example, interpreters who interpret for a four-hour jury trial shall be paid \$260. During the time period the Court is not in session for lunch or dinner, the interpreter shall not be paid*

(See Attached Fee Schedule)

Cancellation Policy

In the event the court cancels less than 24 hours before the interpreter is scheduled to work, a cancellation fee of \$200 or a 2-hour minimum will be paid for in-person, or \$130 or a 2-hour minimum will be paid for remote cancellations.

For example, an interpreter who is scheduled for Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. and receives a cancellation notice at 9:30 a.m. on Monday will receive a cancellation fee of \$200 for in-person, or \$130 for remote. However, if the cancellation notice is received at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, a cancellation fee may not be paid.

Less Common Languages

If interpreter services are required for “less common” languages, the amount paid may, if deemed necessary by the judge, exceed the guideline amounts.

IV. BILLING

Invoice Information: Invoices should be sent to the Staff Services Coordinator in the Court Administrator’s Office within 30 days of the hearing. In order to be processed, the invoice must contain the following information:

1. Vendor name and address.
2. Travis County vendor number.
3. Interpreter’s name.
4. Case data (i.e. cause number, party requiring interpreter, name of Judge presiding over hearing).
5. Type of proceeding / case (e.g. CPS, jury trial, mediation, VLS, TRGLA).
6. Language interpreted.
7. Date/time for provided service.
8. Hourly rate (see approved rate sheet).
9. Duration of hearing.
10. Total billed amount.

V. INTERPRETERS FOR VIRTUAL HEARINGS

Interpreters for virtual hearings must be able to communicate with clients via the Travis County Courts Zoom platform. Interpreters are, therefore, encouraged to complete any readily available Zoom training related to utilization of the separate language channel. If an interpreter is unable to access such training or needs additional assistance, he or she should contact Ms. Lauri Roberts(Lauri.Roberts@traviscountytexas.gov) for assistance with accessing such training in advance of the hearing date.

CIVIL and FAMILY COURTS

In-Person Fee Schedule for Hourly Rate Increments (Foreign Language Court Interpreters)

Length of Hearing	Amount Paid
2 Hour Minimum	\$200.00
2 Hours and 15 Minutes	\$225.00
2 Hours and 30 Minutes	\$250.00
2 Hours and 45 Minutes	\$275.00
3 Hours	\$300.00
3 Hours and 15 Minutes	\$325.00
3 Hours and 30 Minutes	\$350.00
3 Hours and 45 Minutes	\$375.00
4 Hours	\$400.00

**Continue to add \$25.00 for every 15-minute increment over 4 hours.*

Remote Fee Schedule for Hourly Rate Increments (Foreign Language Court Interpreters)

Length of Hearing	Amount Paid
2 Hour Minimum	\$ 130.00
2 Hours and 15 Minutes	\$ 146.25
2 Hours and 30 Minutes	\$ 162.50
2 Hours and 45 Minutes	\$ 178.75
3 Hours	\$ 195.00
3 Hours and 15 Minutes	\$ 211.25
3 Hours and 30 Minutes	\$ 227.50
3 Hours and 45 Minutes	\$ 243.75
4 Hours	\$ 260.00

**Continue to add \$16.25 for every 15-minute increment over 4 hours.*